

CRLS School Council: April 29, 2014

Damon Smith, Principal
Greta Hardina, Family Liaison
Gail Stubbs
Nicole Chambers
John Delancey
Emily Dexter
Janey O'Reilly
Patty Nolan
Bob Birnbaum
Teresa Walker
Mike Frutkoff
Fran Cronin
Larry Childs
Craig Kelley
Mom
Mom
Adam Manacher, Co-Chair

Incoming Ninth Grade Potluck

- 6 to 8PM on May 6
- 50 most-asked questions will be made into pamphlet (hopefully)
- Deliver food by 5:30PM
- Need extra plates and utensils
- Eat first then presentations by FOCA, FOCRLS, Arts Committee
- Patty asked if CLRS has compostable items to use and suggested using Cambridge water
- Hoping for not more than 200 because of cafeteria seating
- Ordered RSTA cookies
- Adam has had 4 replies from parents as of today

School Council Elections

- Two Learning Community and one at-large position open for Council (2-year commitment)
- Venue changes for next year's Council meetings to try to increase family engagement
- Sept to Dec at Windsor Clinic, Jan to Mar at CRLS, and Apr to Jun at Jefferson Park
- Return nominations by end of May
- If more people are interested than there are open slots, then School Council votes
- More active School Council in the past three years
- Make sure practice follows Mass. General Counsel (MGC?) instructions
- Should be parity between teachers and parents as well as diversity
- Tuesdays are already long days for CRLS teachers; faculty meetings end at 4PM. The they have to wait around until 6 for SC meeting.
- Could possibly alternate day of week or time of meeting
- Develop survey to determine flexibility of teachers and parents
- Three years ago it was almost balanced because there weren't many people attending
- Teachers wanted five reps and worked hard to get the numbers
- Should there be a subcommittee to discuss these issues?

Update on SIP

Problem of practice

Theory of action (Richard Elmore)

High-level strategies

Summary of action plan

Action plan

Intersection of AA/Latino and low-SES and/or OSE is probably the majority of students

SIP written back in March 2013 that was right after NEASC took place

The lack of articulated learning expectations was found to be the “root” of the achievement gap

Not asking staff to be robots but to adopt effective practices

Action Plan issues:

- Developing common practices is biggest barrier
- Principal identified 4 professional development strands (technology, literacy skill sets across disciplines, expectations & beliefs, real and authentic assessments and lessons)
- Principal wants to look at literacy across the curriculum first but faculty wants to develop common expectations and beliefs first
- Principal thinks this will be an important conversation

Identify frameworks (what students need to know) and instructional design (how to teach to all kids)

- Can this be done in tandem?

Teachers must see students at their level and that they can rise to the next level

Can't measure students based on our own cultural beliefs

NEASC said same committee structure cannot be maintained

Should outside experts be brought in to help already-stressed internal participants to speed things up?

“articulate” (learning expectations) the key word because teachers already have high expectations for kids

Expectations may not be consistent across the board ie: treat CP kids the same as HN kids

Damon believes in community coming together to meet goal

Teachers can be given tools but need to change their beliefs/expectations first

Statements propel CRLS to decide on professional development events on literacy and expectations

Some think it will take more hours/budget to get this done; it is challenging but don't be held back by constraints

As work is done on “changing beliefs and expectations” conversations are immediately changed as well as school culture

We need to document the process: meetings and/or changes

A request for more in-depth discussion about SIP

PARCC

As PARCC moves forward, will there be a risk to block scheduling?

This May CRLS will be giving 65 9th grade students the PARCC ELA test

State and school will gather information about the experience

Have not discussed PARCC and block scheduling together because there is not enough information

PARCC will be administrated online

CRLS will get feedback directly from students

Block Scheduling

Class size issue; district not hiring new teachers

All student requests are in; there are History and French issues regarding demand

Principal believes there is enough staff to keep classes at 24 students or less

CRLS can hire more teachers to cover more sections of a class because it was in the budget

Could have numbers by May meeting

Closed electives that were smaller than 10

Want to meet student requests but not create huge movement during drop/add

Aspen

Little bit of time at beginning of year to train in Aspen

Hoped to make grades live in November but took longer than expected and ended up being February

Teachers have not had intensive training in Aspen

Teacher finds Aspen confusing even with video tutorials